



Working with Vermont Information Consortium (VIC)

What are the primary roles of VIC – What does VIC do?

- Builds financial-based transaction applications for state agencies
- Hosts web applications
- Hosts web sites
- Provides a content management system (CMS) (to be built)

What does VIC not do?

- Internal development. For example, VIC does not provide database development, networking services, intranet, etc.
- Provide content. All content is provided by the experts – agency personnel.
- Provide services for non-State of Vermont customers. VIC only works for the State of Vermont, providing services for the state.
- VIC does not build applications that take jobs away from state agency personnel. Rather, the applications generally free-up agency staff to work on the job they were hired to perform and increase productivity.

Building applications for state agencies:

VIC will be working with state agencies to build applications that benefit both state agencies and the customers (either citizens or businesses) of those agencies. For state agencies, the benefit is usually measured in the reduced workload that will result (e.g., reduction of paper forms that must be key-entered being sent to the agency) and the accuracy of information being entered into the systems. For customers, the benefit is clear – the ability to interact with government in a simple, easy-to-use fashion that is convenient and open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

How do I get VIC to build an application for me?

In some cases, VIC may approach some of the agencies to discuss building applications. In other cases, state agencies will approach VIC with their own ideas for building applications. Regardless of the approach, VIC and the agency will together discuss the current business process and how we can translate that process into a web application. We will also discuss the Portal Fee that will go to VIC.

What's a Portal Fee?

VIC does not charge agencies for building services. All application development, hosting, and maintenance is done at no cost to the agency. Rather, VIC makes back its investment in overhead and development through fees added (or, in some cases, taken from within the statutory fee) to the cost of the transaction. This is called a Portal Fee and is paid by the users of the application. Portal fees are discussed and mutually agreed upon by VIC and the agency. All portal fees are presented to the user upfront in the application so that he/she knows what to expect as they perform the transaction.

VIC will enter into an agreement with each agency with which it agrees to build services and charge fees. This agreement (including the fees to be charged) will be presented to the Director of Web Services, Harry Bell, for review prior to its presentation to the Vermont Web Portal Board.

How does VIC decide which applications to build?

In all cases, applications are evaluated for the benefit referenced above. VIC will then present each application for approval to the Vermont Web Portal Board (VWPB). The VWPB will review the application and the portal fees and vote on each for development approval. Upon approval by the board, the application is placed into the VIC development queue. VIC will work diligently and closely with the agency to develop timelines and milestones for development. VIC will assign a project manager to work with the agency, and each agency will do the same to work with VIC.

I've got a project and I want to get going. How soon can I get started?

In conjunction with Harry Bell, VIC is working on developing a business plan that will detail some milestones for the development of the Vermont portal. Once the business plan is complete, we will have a better idea of (1) how quickly we can get started on building agency applications and (2) which applications we will be presenting to the Portal Board and building.

What's the typical development life-cycle?

VIC will develop applications using a standard development life-cycle. The steps are:

1. Requirements gathering – understand the needs of the agency, review current process, evaluate technical specifications (e.g., is the agency's backend system ready to accept web filings and, if so, how).
2. Prototype the application – VIC will build a web application prototype that is not a functional application, but rather a step-by-step web "shell" that will allow the agency to walk through the application and make any suggested changes prior to full-scale development. Agency personnel will sign-off on the prototype prior to entering the development stage.
3. Development – VIC will develop the application and the interfaces with the agency. This includes developing the exchange of data both to and from the agency.
4. Testing – This critical step is often the most important in application development. Both agency staff as well as VIC staff will test the application for any bugs and will document these so that they can be addressed.
5. Deployment – Once the application is fully tested and approved by the agency, the application will be deployed and live on the web. Agency personnel will sign-off on the application prior to go-live.
6. Maintenance – VIC will maintain the application throughout the life of the app, ensuring that it does not encounter any problems.

Whom do I contact to discuss building an application?

Harry Bell, the State Webmaster, will be the single point of contact between the state and VIC. Harry can be reached at Harry.Bell@state.vt.us or at 828-5338.

Casey Faiman, General Manager of VIC, will be the primary contact for the development of new applications. Casey can be reached at 802-318-7204 or at casey@nicusa.com.

Adam Woodworth, Director of Development of VIC, will be leading all technical development for VIC. Adam can be reached at 802-318-7087 or at adam@nicusa.com.

VIC is in the process of acquiring office space in Montpelier, which will be located at 535 Stonecutters Way on the third floor.